

## News Release

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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## New MN Law: It's Now Illegal to Place ANY Garbage and Waste on Ice Impacts Anglers and Winter Recreationists Statewide

**Nov. 17, 2023:** Effective July 1, 2023, it's illegal to place garbage and human/other waste on or under the ice on Minnesota's lakes and rivers. Garbage, rubbish, cigarette filters, debris from fireworks, offal, the body of a dead animal, litter, sewage and any other waste needs to be stored inside your shelter, motor vehicle or any other conveyance or inside a container that is secured to your shelter, motor vehicle or conveyance. The fine is \$100, plus administration and other fees.

To do your part:

- **Make a plan** for trash and waste removal before you hit the ice.
- **Use colored garbage bags**, which are easier to see.
- **Do not place your garbage and waste on or under the ice**, it's the law.
- **Make sure all garbage is secure** before departing.
- **Remove all** wood blocking, insulation and materials when moving a fish house.

Introduced by Representative Andrew Myers during the 2023 legislative session, the Keep It Clean bill was a collaborative effort among the Keep It Clean Coalition, Representative Myers, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN-DNR), the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), MN-FISH, Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates and Minnesota Soil and Water Conservation Districts (MN-SWCDs). It received bi-partisan support and was signed into law in May 2023.

"In recent years, ice fishing and other forms of outdoor recreation on Minnesota's lakes and rivers have been booming," says Joe Henry, Executive Director of Lake of the Woods Tourism and founding member of the Keep It Clean Coalition. "It's exciting to see more people enjoying the outdoors but with the increased activity has come an increase in the amount of garbage and human waste left on and under the ice. The new law helps address this problem."

“Garbage and waste don’t belong on the ice, under the ice or along our shorelines,” says Robyn Dwight, President of the Upper Red Lake Association and Keep It Clean Coalition Member. “Prior to this law, it was very difficult for Minnesota DNR conservation officers to enforce any anti-littering efforts. This law is a game changer and puts the focus where it should be — on individual accountability.”

To help raise awareness of the law, the Keep It Clean Coalition is launching a two-year digital and print media campaign, funded by the Minnesota Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment. State agencies and lake associations are also helping to spread the word.

“We’re very excited about the momentum this grassroots effort is generating,” says Ann Brucciani Lyon, Vice Chair, Mille Lacs Area Community Foundation and Keep It Clean Coalition Member. “Even before the law passed, businesses around Mille Lacs reported a significant — and much welcomed — reduction in the amount of garbage visitors were leaving behind during the 2022-2023 ice fishing season due to the awareness created by the Keep It Clean campaign. Clean water and wetlands are essential for a healthy and sustainable fishery, other forms of wildlife, and for tourism.”

As awareness of the campaign spreads, membership does too. The campaign grew from three lakes — Lake of the Woods, Upper Red Lake and Mille Lacs Lake — at the start of the 2022-2023 season to encompass thousands of lakes. It continues to grow as lake associations, chambers of commerce, national parks, MN-SWCDs, and tourism bureaus join to protect their precious water resources. For more info or to join Keep It Clean at no cost, visit <https://keepitcleanmn.org/>.

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**About Keep It Clean:** Community stakeholders at Lake of the Woods started the Keep It Clean campaign to address the growing problem of garbage and human waste left on the ice a decade ago. During the 2021-2022 ice-fishing season, Upper Red Lake and Mille Lacs Lake partnered with Lake of the Woods to raise awareness of the issue and address the problem on their respective lakes. As word of this collaborative effort spread during the 2022-2023 ice-fishing season, the campaign grew to encompass thousands of lakes. That number continues to grow. In May 2023, the Keep It Clean bill was signed into law. The new statewide law makes it illegal for garbage and waste to be placed on or under the ice Minnesota’s lakes and rivers effective July 1, 2023.